

HOUSE
RESEARCH

ORGANIZATION bill analysis

5/23/89

SB 144
Green
(Barton)

SUBJECT: Compensation of Houston police in specialized divisions

COMMITTEE: Urban Affairs: favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 6 ayes--Pierce, P. Moreno, Beauchamp, Hunter, Park,
Polumbo

2 nays--Haggerty, Shea

3 absent--Blair, Edwards, Lucio

SENATE VOTE: On final passage, Feb. 21 -- voice vote

WITNESSES: For--Ronnie Castello, Houston Park Police Association.
(Registering in support but not testifying--Robert
Bryce, Houston Park Police Association; Ron DeLord,
Combined Law Enforcement Associations of Texas; Terry
Hughes and Donald Brogden, Houston Airport Police
Officers Association)

Against--None

DIGEST: SB 144 would amend sec. 143, Local Government Code, to
require that Houston peace officers employed in
specialized police divisions receive the same
compensation and benefits as their counterparts of
equal rank and longevity in a regular police division.

SUPPORTERS SAY: Patrol officers in Houston special divisions such as
parks or airport police now are treated as second class
public servants. Patrol officers in these special
divisions are paid more than \$200 per month less than
regular Houston patrol officers. Yet they have
essentially the same duties and responsibilities, are
trained at the Houston police academy and are employed
by the city. This issue is equal pay for equal work,
and the existing inequities have created low morale
among the affected divisions.

OPPONENTS SAY: This bill represents an attempt by officers in special
divisions who are nearing retirement to increase their
base pay so that their retirement benefits will be
increased. The inequities will disappear when, over
time, these special divisions are phased out through
attrition.